Australian Bureau of Statistics

6222.0 - Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia, July 1997

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 12/12/1997

MEDIA RELEASE

December 12, 1997 Embargoed 11:30am (AEST) 166/97

Job search experience of the unemployed

Unemployed people reported their main difficulty in finding work as being "considered too young or too old by employers" and "too many applicants for available jobs" (both 15 per cent), according to a July 1997 survey released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics today.

Other main difficulties reported in the survey included "no vacancies at all" (13 per cent) and "lacked necessary skills/education" (12 per cent).

Younger unemployed people were more likely to perceive their lack of work experience and training as a major barrier to finding work. Unemployed people aged 15 to 24 years reported "insufficient work experience" and "lacked necessary skills/education" (both 17 per cent) as their main difficulty in finding work.

In contrast, the main difficulty reported by people in the 25 to 44 age group was "too many applicants for available jobs" (17 per cent) and for those aged 45 years or over was "considered too young or too old by employers" (44 per cent).

Of all unemployed people, 77 per cent were registered with the then Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) in July 1997. Of those unemployed seeking full-time work, the majority (83 per cent) indicated that they were registered with the CES, and had contacted prospective employers.

One third of all unemployed people were considered to be long-term unemployed (unemployed for 52 weeks or more). They reported their main difficulty in finding work as being "considered too young or too old by employers" (20 per cent). The majority (87 per cent) of the long-term unemployed had not received any offers of employment in the previous 12 months.

In July 1997, the average duration of unemployment was 56 weeks. Those reporting "considered too young or too old by employers" as their main difficulty had the longest average duration of unemployment, of 78 weeks.

Those without post-school qualifications had been unemployed, on average, for 11 weeks more than those with post-school qualifications (61 weeks compared to 50 weeks). The most commonly reported main difficulty in finding work for those without post-school qualifications was "lacked necessary skills/education" (15 per cent), while for those with post-school qualifications, the most commonly reported main difficulty was "considered too young or too old by employers" (16 per cent).

Details are in **Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia, July 1997** (cat. no.

6222.0), available from ABS bookshops in all capital cities.

This page last updated 8 December 2006

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